**District Councillor Richard Kershaw Report to Binham Parish Council March 2022**

NNDC has a new Leader, Tim Adams, who was elected in February as Sarah Butikofer has had to step down for personal reasons.

The Council's Budget for the forthcoming year was approved at the February 23rd Full Council meeting. it is worth mentioning that NNDC only receive 8 to 9p in the pound from the Council tax bill.

Covid numbers are rising and it is concerning that as from 31st March testing will cease and the Council will cease to receive data from NHS, PHE and the CCG so we will be in the dark re figures and locations of outbreaks. Our Covid Officers will also stand down at 31st March as funding has been withdrawn.

The 4th dose for the over 75s and clinically vulnerable will commence at the beginning of April. Early indications suggest the rise in cases and Hospital admissions are related to the drop off in efficacy of the the booster.

Coming to the end of the tree planting season we have now planted 65,000 trees and are on target to plant a tree for every resident by March 2023.

Consultation on the Local Plan has now been completed and the Plan will submitted to the Planning Inspectorate under Regulation 19.

We are in the process of completing all payments of Covid related grants to businesses, deadline end of March. In the last round of Omnicron payments NNDC were the top Council in UK for numbers of businesses paid and 3rd in UK in total amounts paid behind Manchester and Bradford Councils, very good result by our officers again.